

# Project Relevance: collaborative approaches to contextual integration

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Discovering Mutual Benefits to the Renovation of Fenway Park

By Sarah Tarbet and Sarah Laliberte



*Fenway Park, 1912.*

## Abstract

This research explores the possibility that the rehabilitation of Fenway Park is an exceptional precedent in collaboration and integration. The history of the park as infill into a tight urban fabric forced the closeness between the site and the community surrounding it. Today it remains the center of the Fenway/Kenmore neighborhood providing jobs, culture, and liveliness. In the late 1990's the threat of the park's demolition and reconstruction disturbed residents of the neighborhood, the city, and the nation. Against all odds, a collection of small community groups brought attention to the benefits and necessity of keeping the park in tact, and renovating this historic landmark. Each "activist" faced opposition and even degradation from the Red Sox owners and their fans. After 2002 when the Red Sox were bought by John Henry and headed by his team of experts, the park was given a second chance.

The success of this renovation relied heavily on community involvement and political compromise. It also would not have been possible without the attention of John Henry's team, most notably Janet Marie Smith, and her tactics with residents and community groups. Instead of fighting, she took their suggestions and their information to restore a place and improve a district. As a result, today parcels in the Fenway are being sold and developed readily because of the confidence in the community.

## Preface

We would like to thank everyone who participated in our research, without whom we would have never been able to complete this case study. Notably, Erika Tarlin from Save Fenway Park for providing us with valuable insight into the complexities of coordinating with an involved community and for sharing her numerous contacts with us. Also, Gary Russell from the Boston Landmarks Commission, Chuck Izzo from D’Agnostino, Izzo and Quirk Architects, John Keeny from Walsh Brothers, and the Boston Red Sox for allowing us the opportunity to witness first hand the complex renovation process.

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## Introduction

The integration of new built form into existing urban fabric places collaboration between all participants of critical importance. As emerging designers, we felt that understanding the process of collaboration would be of great value as we move forward with our careers. Through our investigation we were hoping to discover how a project could successfully integrate itself into an existing network of infrastructure, urban fabric, and community relationships. The renovation of Fenway Park serves as an excellent study model as it is a building which has modern needs, but is sited in a city that highly values historic precedent. That dichotomy, coupled with passionate community groups and apprehensive business owners, makes the success of Fenway's renovation an inspiring story for emerging designers.

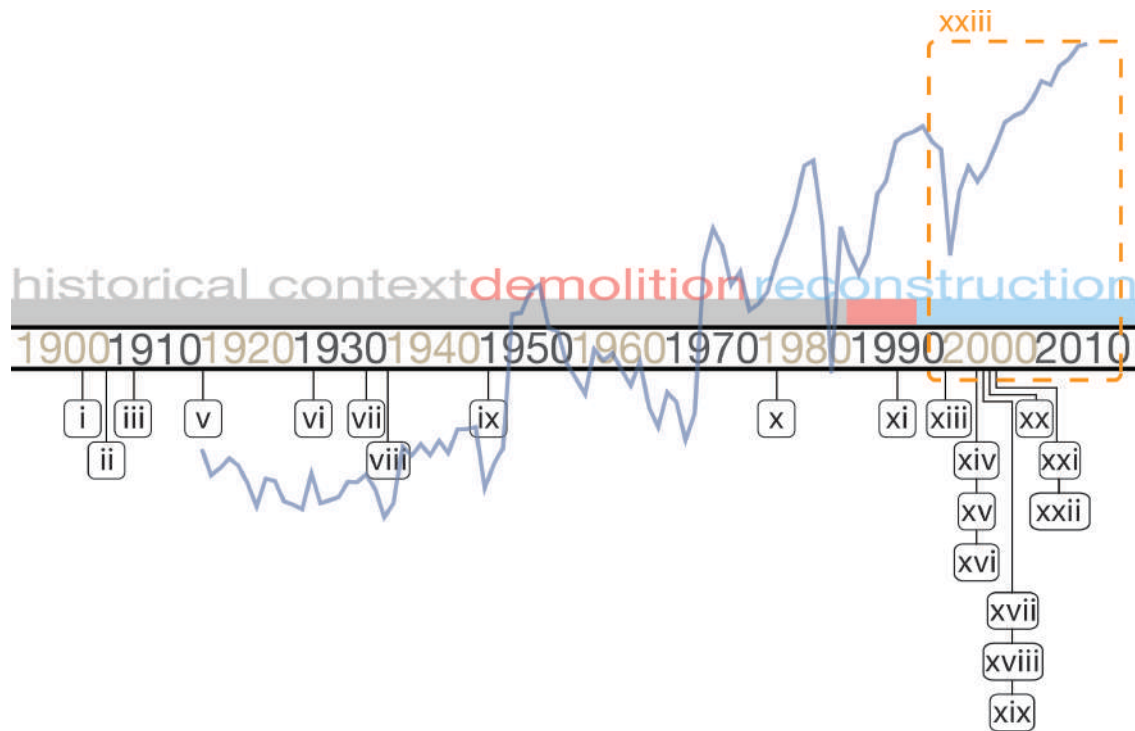
This case study revolves around the project narrative. Each piece of the narrative is designed to stand alone so that the reader can learn from any one section. As such, the analysis can be found throughout and is bounded in each section by an orange call out box. The reader will also find that certain words are highlighted in **bold, colored text**. This signifies the name of one of the many people involved with the project. There is a corresponding section following the narrative that where more information about each person can be found.

## Learning Objective

How can architects ensure the success of a project while including a collection of diverse participants in the design process?

## Context

*“And there is something about Fenway Park, with its feet firmly planted in the past, that makes complete sense, even in today’s newer-than-thou world.”* -Michael Ian Borer, *Journal of Popular Culture*



Overall timeline of Fenway Park, accompanied by attendance rate over the years.

## **Fenway History:**

- i. In 1901, the Boston Pilgrims played at Huntington Avenue Grounds, as part of a slowly emerging American League.
- ii. 1904 the team became property of John I. Taylor, the son of Boston Globe Owner General Charles Henry Taylor.
- iii. In 1907, after 3 years of ownership, J. Taylor decided to rename the team as we know it today, The Red Sox.
- iv. In 1910 Taylor was decided to abandon the Sox's home at the Huntington Avenue Grounds, and determined a new park would be built; Fenway Park.
- v. April 20, 1912 Fenway Park opens with a game against the New York Highlanders (Later known as the Yankees). The game was filled to capacity at 27,000 fans. This came up short at times, even by the '10's standards, and the Red Sox had to use Braves' Field (Boston's National League team until 1955) for larger games to accommodate their crowds.
- vi. On May 8, 1926 a fire destroyed a lot of the left field bleachers. Owner John Quinn at the time did not have enough capital to repair the facilities, and games were held despite of the damage. The effects of the depression affected revenue of the beloved franchise.
- vii. Tom Yawkey purchases the Red Sox and a debilitated Fenway Park to relieve a financially struggling Quinn in 1933. He starts to renovate the whole park and fix it up from its previously neglected state.
- viii. Unfortunately, another fire damages the entire facility shortly after in 1934. Yawkey uses this as an opportunity to renovate the entire park, improving its facilities vastly from its first few decades of existence. Wooden bleachers are replaced by a concrete seating bowl, a wooden left-field wall is replaced by a metal structure, and to protect some of the Lansdowne Street buildings, they put up a barrier screen to the top of Fenway's wall.
- ix. In 1947, The Red Sox's most signature feature is created: The Green Monster.
- x. A message board was added to the field in 1976, and the next major renovations to take place would be under the new owners, in the early 2000's. The same year Tom Yawkey dies, and leaves the Yawkey Trust to his wife Jean. John Harrington takes control of the Red Sox.

**To demolish, or renovate?:**

- xi. Ballparks around the nation start to be rebuilt and refurbished with public subsidies; \$11 billion throughout the US in the 1990's. These funds were being used to build large new sports stadiums in most cases, but one "retro" ballpark was built; Camden Yards. This makes it clear that the nostalgia for baseball translates beautifully to its stadium architecture.
- xii. In 1994, John Harrington and his team discussed a megaplex stadium for the Red Sox and the Patriots, and drew up plans for the complex in several locations around Boston and surrounding areas.
- xiii. Fenway Park is no exception to the profitable baseball industry, and in 1996 it was ranked 6th in the nation for revenue grossing \$88.4 million.
- xiv. The beloved ballpark is the #1 tourist attraction in Massachusetts in 1998, according to the Red Sox.
- xv. The megaplex plan was abandoned and Harrington decided in 1998 that a new facility would replace Fenway park. The stadium would be built adjacent to the historic ballpark and would rely on eminent domain to acquire the necessary space for expansion.
- xvi. That same year, Neighbors and community leaders got together to try and stop the demolition of the historic grounds, and called themselves Save Fenway Park.
- xvii. They are approached in 1999 by Charles Hagenah, of Williams University, and presented with students' plans for renovating Fenway Park in place.
- xviii. 2 days after the Hagenah plan was released to the public, the Boston Globe runs an article presenting John Harrington's reconstruction plans.
- xix. The all-star game, among all of this conflict, was held at Fenway Park at the end of the 1999 season.
- xx. The Save Fenway group was determined to show the Red Sox and the public that renovation was viable, and in 2000 they held a design charette to come up with some plans of their own.
- xxi. After John Harrington realized that his vision new facility across Fenway Park was over, he sold the Red Sox to John Henry in 2001.
- xxii. November of that year, Janet Marie Smith was brought onto the Red Sox front office team as Director of Ballpark Planning and Development. She would be the key to getting a 10 year renovation process of Fenway accomplished during the off-season.
- xxiii. A renovation was completed 2002-2011, highlighting the park's nostalgic qualities, and improving the infrastructure with an all-around meticulous attention to detail.



The following maps should serve as a reference to the streets and locations discussed throughout the case study.



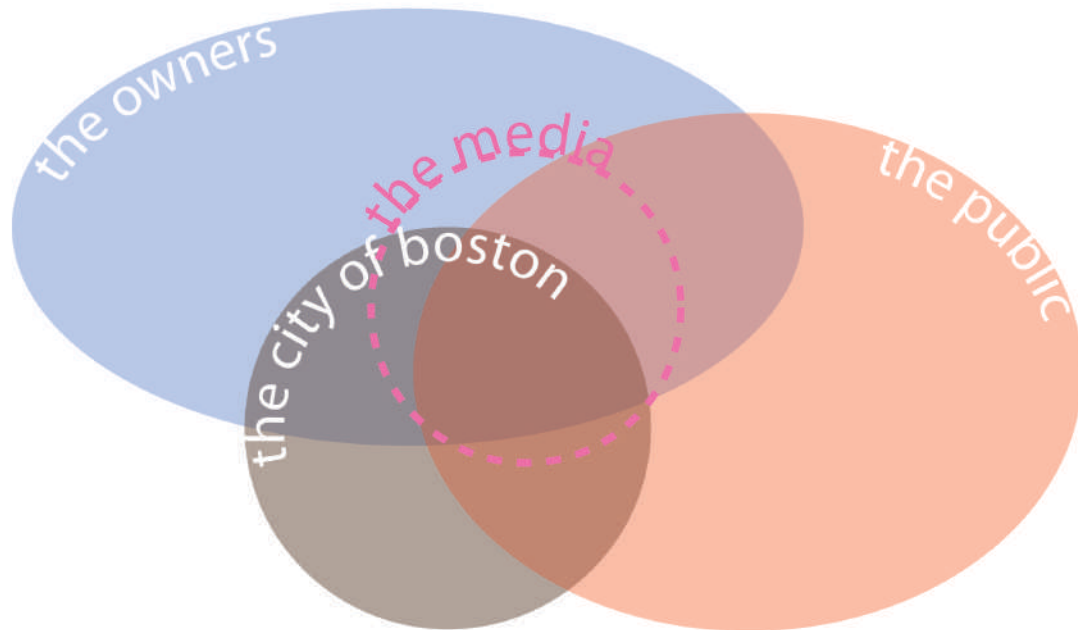
**Neighborhood Scale** Fenway Park is located in Boston’s Fenway/Kenmore neighborhood, a short distance from Kenmore Square. While the ballpark may be the neighborhood’s most notable feature, many other cultural and academic institutions also call Fenway/Kenmore home, including the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston’s Symphony Hall, and Northeastern University. Demographically, Fenway/Kenmore boasts a high number of students because of the many area colleges and universities, as well as the neighborhood’s popular bars and clubs. In recent years, as development has grown in this neighborhood, more young professionals and families have moved into the area.



**Site Scale** The park itself sits among a tight urban fabric in the Fenway/Kenmore neighborhood. The park could only be built inside the structure of the five surrounding streets (Brookline Avenue, Lansdowne Street, Ipswich Street, Van Ness Street, and Yawkey Way), creating an unusual and memorable shape for the park. Because of its physical intimacy and accessibility, it was able to be visited and experienced by a wider audience.

Since its inception in 1912, the park has been a thriving part of the community's economy. Emerging out of a partially industrial, partially medium-density residential neighborhood, the attention drawn to the Red Sox Franchise has forced the neighborhood economy to rely heavily on the sporting events and their fans.

## Contributors



The way that Fenway Park exists today is a result of four major groups of contributors. Each interacts with the other to create a dynamic that informs and determines the outcome of the project. These relationships are established early on in the project timeline, and continue to the present.

Before the renovation, the owners were making all the decisions without involving any of the other parties. The media was interpreting their plans with exactly the attitude that the Sox would hope: positively and definitively. As the plans moved forward, the City of Boston and the Public formed their own opinions, and all were depicted by the media.

During the renovation, and continuing to the present, all parties were in agreement and moving forward together to fulfill mutual project goals. This was a success in collaboration because this project is the manifestation of bringing 3 opposing parties together to create a building that benefits all. The media depicts this process to show correctly that the overall attitude of revitalizing Fenway Park was a dramatic discussion from positive to negative. This case study will assess the project with the mindset that the process was a constant

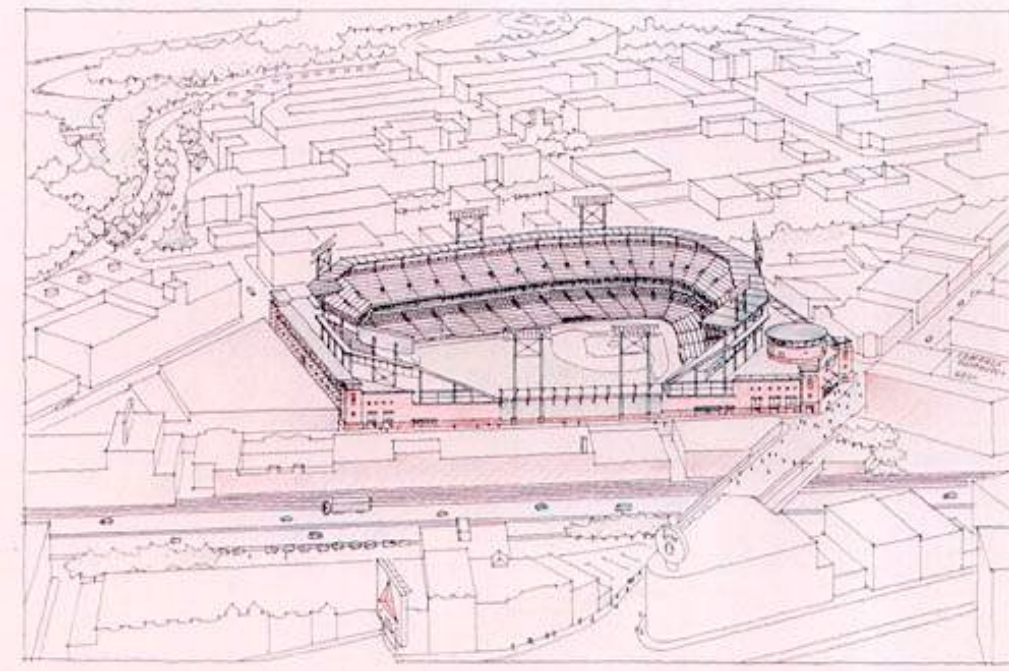
## Project Narrative



*The narrative is organized chronologically and composed of these seven sections.*

### i. A New Fenway

**Megaplex** As early as 1993, there were rumblings in the press of the need for a new ballpark for the Red Sox. The organization stated that in order to be competitive with the rest of the league they needed to overhaul their facilities to become more modern (more seating, bigger seats). Early on some people advocated for the Red Sox to leave their famed Kenmore neighborhood and join in with the development of a sports mega-plex that would also house the Patriots. In 1994 and 1995, both Cannon architects and the Boston Redevelopment Authority (BRA) respectively released renovation plans to the public. This would provide all the amenities of a megaplex, but would keep the original site at Fenway Park. At this point, the general consensus was that rebuilding in the Fenway would be more expensive due to all the infrastructure repairs necessary to expand the current park.



*Aerial view of Cannon Architect's early renovation plans, 1994.*

As a response to the growing competitive nature of professional sports, the owners made a distinct decision that new facilities for the Red Sox were necessary for their survival as a team in Boston. The city was not yet involved, and observed and questioned this development from a distance. This contributed to the public and media portrayal of the megaplex as a vision and not as a reality. The owners were able to move forward with their plan for a new facility based on no opposition, strategically keeping public opinion out of it at the time. The Cannon and BRA plans were the first glimpse into a potential opposition to John Harrington's determination to build a completely new and larger stadium.

**Adjacent Facility** The media reported in 1998 that the Red Sox had begun to develop plans for a new stadium. Initially, public support was slow to grow, and the Boston Preservation Alliance even attempted to release public service announcements fostering support for saving Fenway park. As the Boston Globe reported in April of 1998, Mayor Menino summed up what all of Red Sox Nation was wondering, "how can you replicate Fenway Park?." But even with some uneasy feelings surrounding the issue, the reconstruction plan moved forward and began to garner more support as the Sox were set to host the 1999 All Star Game. In May of that year, Red Sox CEO **John Harrington** and the Red Sox organization released plans developed by architects, HOK Sport to Fenway neighborhood groups of a new park right across the street. There were mixed reactions from group leaders, but the plan still was scheduled to move forward to attempt to gain support from the city council.



*Red Sox's Plan for New Fenway Park, 1999. Developed by Missouri based architect HOK Sport.*

With the construction of Gillette stadium, the Red Sox no longer had the pull to suggest a combined sports arena and set their sights on a baseball stadium adjacent to the current Fenway Park. The closed-door nature of the process initiated by the Red Sox allowed them to move their plans forward without addressing the concerns of the public. The new plans didn't include existing local businesses and instead replaced them with larger corporations. This revealed an attitude upheld by the owners that they had authority over

## ii. Opposition

In early 1999, it appeared that the Red Sox were determined to construct a new, more modern, ballpark. At the same time, a small group of neighbors and dedicated fans had gathered and organized to protect the building they had come to know and love over the years. **Save Fenway Park (SFP)** led the charge against building a new stadium. They felt that renovating Fenway was a viable option that should be further explored. John Harrington, dismissed the group's vision saying that, "it would be easier to straighten the Leaning Tower of Pisa, It just doesn't make economic sense. And even after spending a lot more money, we'd end up with something that doesn't provide what the fans and the team need at this point." His advisors with HOK Sport and **Walsh Brothers**, led by **John Walsh**, researched and discovered that renovating in place would be too costly, intrusive, and unrealistic. Harrington stated that, "common sense tells you that it's hard to play baseball in a construction site."

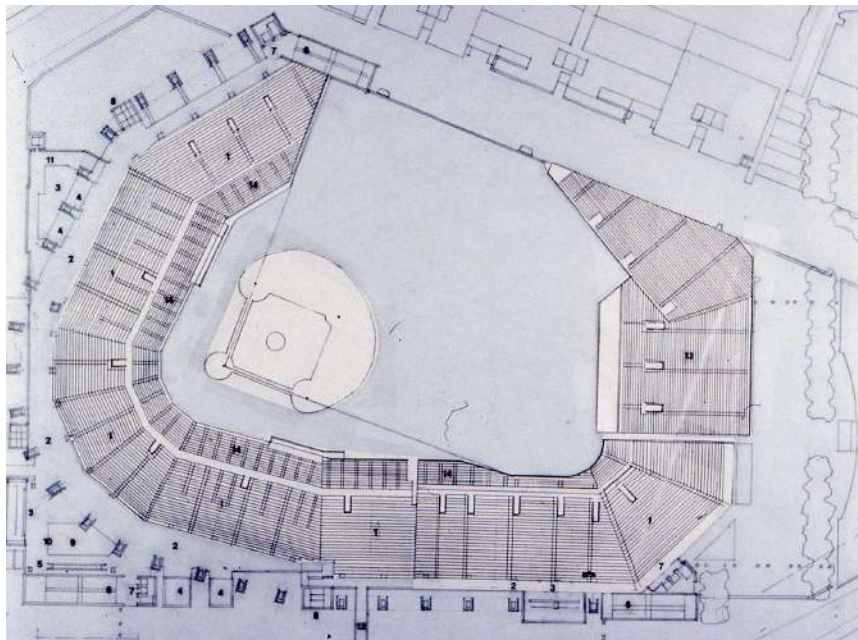
SFP felt that Fenway could and should be renovated, rather than reconstructing and preserving some elements for a small park close by, which was the Red Sox's plan. They were pegged by the media as "zealots" - community activists who didn't understand that a new park was the best option for the Red Sox. Erika Tarlin, of SFP, remembers her dedication to the organization and its goals regarded negatively by the Red Sox organization and the media. Before the Red Sox unveiled their plans to the public SFP knew they had to present an alternative to show that renovation was a possibility, not a pipe dream.

With increased publicity surrounding the renovation and reconstruction issue, public opinion became increasingly polarized and tension grew. The back and forth demanded more attention toward alternatives, slowing down the process of rebuilding that the Red Sox viewed as nearly complete. The strong community voice in the Fenway inevitably forced its way into the Red Sox's decision making. This should have been a sign to John Harrington and his organization that if anything was to get done, they would have to have the support of the neighborhood. Ignoring and disregarding

### iii. Alternatives

**The Hagenah Plan:** **Charles Hagenah** gave the group their first big break. He wanted to create a studio around the idea of renovating Fenway Park. He approached SFP and asked if they had created any renovation plans. They had not yet formed a plan, so Hagenah and his students worked on a proposal that was presented to the public on May 13, 1999. “It was a double decked model with the same number of club seats and luxury suites as the Red Sox plan, but built atop the base of the existing ballpark, with the field and Green Monster intact. A new upper Deck, seating ten thousand, would be cantilevered over adjacent streets, while buildings alongside Fenway would be pressed into service for such uses as team office space and food preparation.” Hagenah also published a report, which stated that it was possible to renovate and expand Fenway in a way that would serve the Red Sox’s needs, both financially and nostalgically.

The Red Sox’s plan was officially unveiled just two days later, but SFP had thrown the first punch and had put the idea of renovation back on the table. The public began to treat SFP’s plans for renovation with more gravity after the support of architects, designers, and other experts. This slowed the momentum of the Red Sox as they began to seek public funding.



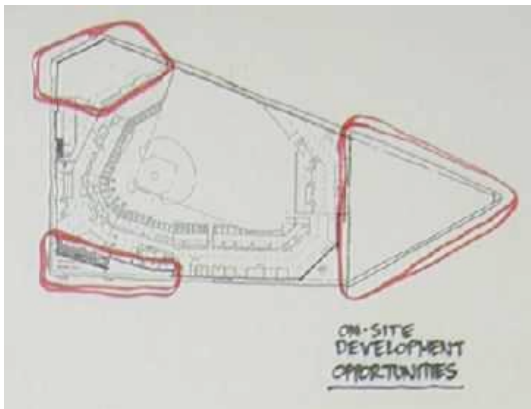
*Ground Floor Renovation Plan by Charles Hagenah Architects, Inc., 1999.*

Hagenah’s plan provided SFP with a confidence that they could prove the Red Sox wrong, and showed the Red Sox organization that they could not ignore the public anymore. Conversations and decisions would no longer happen behind closed doors, and this project involved now not only the Red Sox, but the media, and the public. The city would have to consider all three groups in their decision making.



**Design Charrette:** In August of 2000, SFP and the **Fenway Community Development Corporation (Fenway CDC)** assembled and co-hosted design charrette. At the same time, Boston City Hall was negotiating how much public funding would actually be available to the Red Sox for their proposed plan. The attitude of the charrette was to prepare a concrete and accurate counter-proposal regardless of the decision made by the city. **Phillip Bess**, along with architect Rolando Llanes, split up a group of architects and urban planners to develop 2 distinct options for utilizing Fenway Park's existing grounds. The resulting plans did not attempt to replicate the desired amenities of the Red Sox's new stadium plan, but instead sought to preserve Fenway's character while improving its functionality. They also respected the needs of neighbors and local business owners and tried to improve upon the neighborhood as a whole. Of the two plans developed during the nine day charrette, one was a "reconstruction" proposal, while the other a "preservation" strategy.

The result of the charrette was a comprehensive report entitled *Home Field Advantage*. It provided detailed information (architectural, financial, and political) about why renovating the existing park was the best option for the Red Sox, for the city, and for fans around the nation.



Conceptual Sketch from design charrette.



Stamp design from Llanes rendering.

Moving forward, SFP strategically planned a charrette in a time of uncertainty regarding the funding of the Red Sox's plan. *Home Field Advantage* would help them retain their status as a serious opposition to John Harrington's plans, and would become useful for a new era. Because they came from the neighborhood itself, it was easy for local businesses to believe that they truly had the neighborhood's best interests in mind.

#### iv. Economic Reality

**Procuring Public Funds** While SFP was feverishly working to develop design alternatives in hopes of convincing the Red Sox that renovating the park was a viable option, the Red Sox were pushing ahead and creating a financing plan for the stadium design developed by HOK Sport. The proposed stadium was priced at \$545 million. This price included the construction cost of \$350 million, as well as other costs such as land acquisition and infrastructure. To acquire the land that the Red Sox had set their sights on, the City of Boston would need to use their power of eminent domain to take over the private properties that were currently located on the desired site.

Before May 2000, the Red Sox had yet to present a formal financing plan to the city. They had simply stated that they would be requesting about half of needed funds from public money. Despite that fact, Mayor Menino's earlier skepticism of the project had seemingly diminished as he stated, "I love Fenway Park and I was an advocate of renovating it right where it is, too. But I was educated and now I realize that it's just unrealistic." Alluding to the Red Sox's earlier claims that their architects and engineers deemed renovation as an impossibility. On May 19, 2000, a formal plan was finally presented to the city. The Red Sox would be asking the city and state for \$275 million, and the Red Sox would be putting up \$352 million.

At this time, questions began circulating as to whether or not tax payer money should be used to finance a private project. **Thomas Finneran**, the state house speaker, who had halted the use of public money for the Patriot's stadium, was one individual who spoke out against the city and state allocating funds for this project. He stated, "I don't think it's a taxpayer responsibility or obligation to subsidize professional-sports operations." Finneran's sentiments were not the only wrench being thrown in the works. The state budget had recently been overrun by the \$14 billion price tag of the Big Dig, which relocated the Central Artery below the city. This made decision makers wary of committing to fund another costly project.

On July 25, 2000, the city and state announced their plan. They would allocate \$312 million in public money (the price discrepancy comes from higher than projected land costs). \$100 million would come from the state to be used for infrastructure, with the remaining \$212 million from the city. A hearing would be held a few days later, at which questions arose as to how the city planned on claiming eminent domain over a questionably "blighted" neighborhood (this distinction was required in order to exercise that power). Menino's response to the challengers was, "we don't mean 'blight' in the real sense of the word 'blight.'" The ballpark financing bill did eventually pass at both the state and city level, and for a moment it seemed that Fenway's fate had been marked.

**Economic Uncertainty** Even though the Red Sox had secured a large percentage of their costs from public money, it remained to be seen if they would be able to match the \$352 million they needed to begin construction. In a statement released shortly after the bill passed, John Harrington said, "we have to be candid about the realities we face. We will start working immediately with the city, our business leaders and our bankers to determine how best to move forward."

In October of that year, Harrington surprised everyone when he announced that the Yawkey Trust was putting the Red Sox up for sale. This declaration placed doubt in the minds of some city councilors, who still needed to decide whether the land could be acquired by eminent domain, as to if money was being properly distributed. Councilor **Michael Flaherty** stated, "It would be irresponsible and reckless to turn around and commit public financing to a new stadium today only to find out tomorrow the team's being purchased by an Internet multibillionaire."

When Harrington first began trying to secure public money to fund the new stadium he was buttressed with the backing of the city, most notably Mayor Menino, as well as the media. This support gave the new ballpark plan more power than the alternative plans which lacked the reinforcement from powerful players. Finneran was a catalyst in shifting political opinion surrounding this project. His questioning of the appropriateness of using so much tax payer money made some politicians see that the benefits of a new stadium may not outweigh the costs. The release of *Home Field Advantage* also gave the notion of renovation more validity. Public and political opinion turned in favor of renovation after Harrington announced that the Red Sox were up for sale. People were unwilling to take the risk when the future of the organization was undecided.

## v. New Owners

With the Sox up for sale, there was increased uncertainty and slight panic among fans. It was not longer only a question of the fate of Fenway Park, but also the fate of the Red Sox themselves.

**John Henry** and partners were chosen among many bidders because of their favorable ties with MLB. This was not a local preference, in fact at first there was anger and push back about the decision. It was thought that only locals, or Bostonians could possibly understand what the Red Sox needed, and would also be able to make the right decision about Fenway Park.

After John Henry, **Tom Werner**, and **Larry Lucchino** bought the Sox, Lucchino was named CEO- he stated in his inaugural press conference, “we will preserve all that is good about Fenway Park and take that experience to new levels.” This gave Save Fenway Park new hope that their beloved park would be preserved. Shortly after the new owners were settled in the Fenway, Tarlin, presented the plans from the charrette to the new owners. She recalls that they actually thanked her instead of shutting her out.

In November 2001, **Janet Marie Smith** was brought on to run stadium operations at Fenway. Smith and Lucchino had worked together for the Baltimore Orioles in the late 1980s and Smith had become well known for the work she had done in the construction of Camden Yards. In 2002, Smith revealed that seats were to be installed atop the Green Monster, as well as moving food prep to adjacent buildings so more concourse space could be utilized. This was the beginning of an official renovation process for Fenway Park that would improve the experience, provide handicap accessibility, and revitalize the immediate surroundings, and whole neighborhood.

John Henry and his team knew that public opinion was important. They had to struggle to gain support widespread, but the neighborhood was quick to side with them. Both Tom Werner and Larry Lucchino had conducted research to determine for themselves if it was valuable to save the park or destroy it. They both came in with their own plans to keep the park, and enhance its unique qualities.

Their experience in San Francisco and Baltimore prepared them to execute a ballpark that would be integrated into an already established urban fabric and a tight knit community. Bringing Janet Marie Smith onto the team in Boston would ensure that integration and collaboration could be achieved.

## vi. Renovation

**The Red Sox** The Red Sox assigned a specific team, led by Janet Marie Smith, to handle all aspects of the Fenway Park renovation, including all of the neighborhood outreach. The period before the renovation, Janet Marie Smith included all parties that may be affected by work on Fenway Park. As Director of Planning and Development, she considered the whole Fenway neighborhood and all its occupants part of the project. The “**Fenway Affairs**” department as part of the Red Sox front office is completely dedicated to involving those community members even after the renovation project. Each year after work is completed during the offseason, Larry Cancro and Beth Krudys hold a neighborhood meeting where they treat residents, business owners, and community groups to some ballpark food and a Fenway Park tour, just to make sure that they are all informed of the progress before the rest of the public. They have the ability to voice any concerns or ask any questions to the Red Sox. **Paul Hanlon** takes the crowd through a montage of all the ballpark improvements over the past 10 years, and seems to give credit throughout to Janet Marie Smith. Even community members and faculty members inquire about her well-being and her whereabouts since she left the team in 2009.

Larry Luccino and the Red Sox owners were strategic with their planning even before they bought the team. It was even more important to them to be a favorite of the Fenway neighborhood, than any other Red Sox fans. This was planned so that they could get things done. Learning from the old owners' mistakes, they knew that if the public did not support their renovation plans, then they would not succeed. The renovation would be stalled, and so would their stream of revenue. Bringing Janet Marie Smith in to provide her expertise in community outreach and personal relations as well as in architecture and preservation was the decision that allowed the Red Sox to fulfill their 10 year plan successfully. It seems that everyone has fond memories of Janet Marie Smith, and how she helped them each fulfill their goals with the project. Architect, planner, public relations expert, her overall accomplishment was really translating everyone's needs into a cohesive reality.

**The Project** From 2002 onward, the Red Sox continued to make changes to the park. The renovation team consisted of a familiar Walsh Brothers in addition to **D'Agostino, Izzo, and Quirk Architects** as project architects. In addition to the number of community groups that were involved in the initial design process and approval, Janet Marie Smith brought in Leslie Donovan with **Tremont Preservation Consultants** to help fulfill the goal of meticulously restoring the park to evoke its original charm.. This was particularly important for the project because, as per SFP's suggestion, the park could receive a significant tax credit for attaining landmark status.

Gary Russell with **Boston Landmarks Commission** explains that although Fenway Park is not yet a landmark, it is on an accelerated track to becoming one. As long as the design complies with Mr. Russell's expertise, and the designs are approved by the commission, everything is in order to receive that extra funding. Each year, in the off season, a new series of carefully planned renovations would take place. They each had to apply and be approved by the Landmarks Commission, as well as the **Massachusetts Historical Commission** even through opening day of 2011. They also demanded a close coordination between DAIQ and Walsh brothers to complete all tasks in accordance to their rigorous schedule. John Keeny, project supervisor at Walsh Brothers says that they had 6 meetings a day during the last few months of construction.

Chuck Izzo and his team proudly show off Fenway's new wide-open concourses and explain that there was an abundance of underutilized space. They went in, identified which walls could be demolished, and took them down to open up the space. In some cases, they opened up the concourses to the outside to make the 100 year old ballpark feel even more spacious. Accessibility was a concern for Janet Marie Smith and the Red Sox, and now there are 3 elevators in the park, providing handicap accessibility to all the sky boxes.

On March 23, 2005, the new owner ship officially announced that they would be staying at Fenway for the long haul. Renovations would continue for the next 6 years, overall there were 10 years of renovation work done. Work was finished before the 2011 season.



*Renovation Project Timeline*

## vii. Centennial

In 2012, Fenway Park will celebrate its 100th year, making it the oldest utilized professional sports venue in the nation. The anticipation surrounding the celebration has already begun to grow, with Lucchino remarking in late 2010, “We want to make it a big megillah.” The banner image of SFP’s website now reads, with almost an audible sigh of relief, “Fenway Park Saved!” and invites visitors to make plans for the upcoming centennial festivities.

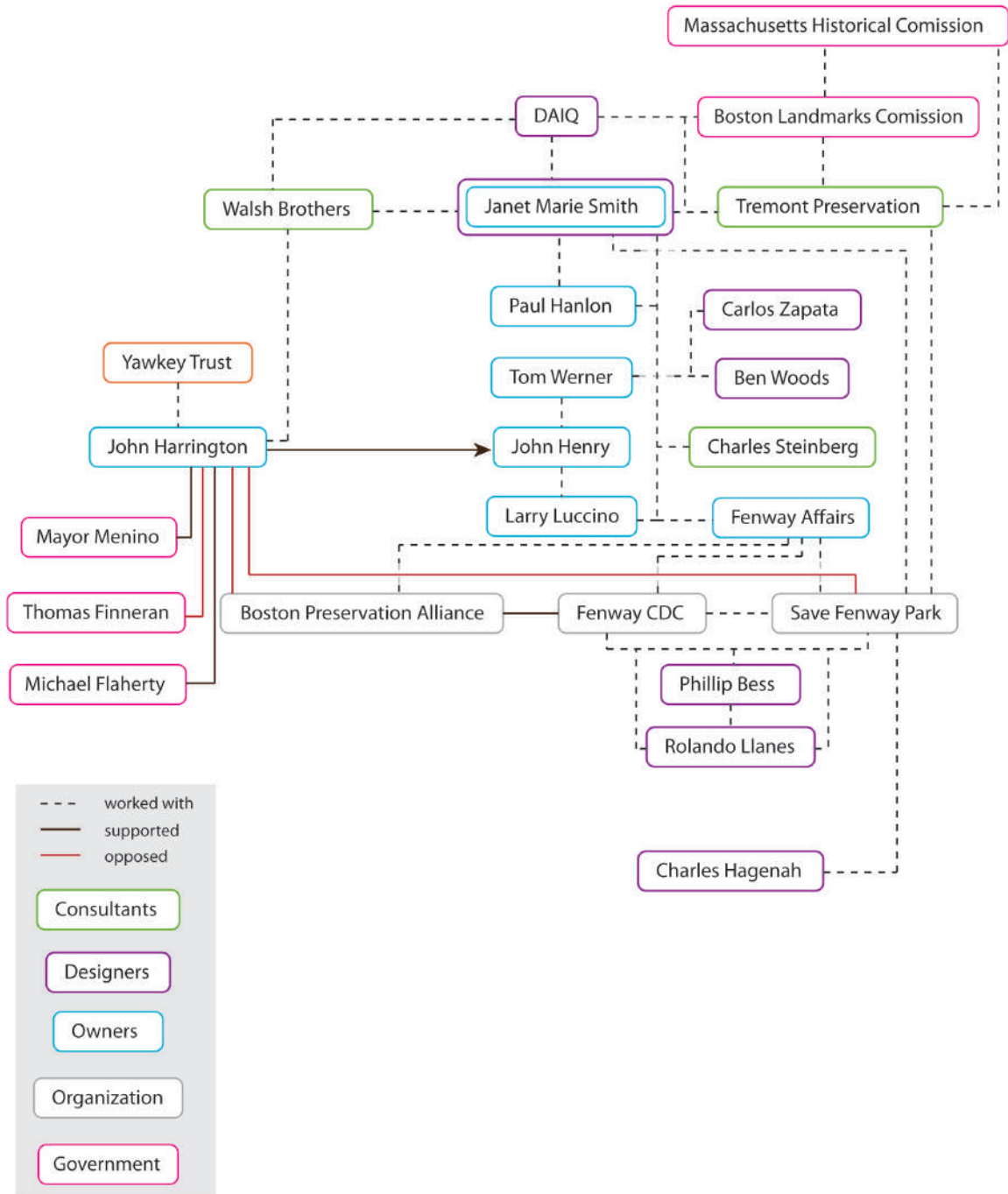
Lucchino summed up the Red Sox organization’s attitude toward the ballpark when he stated:

***“We constantly refer to Fenway Park as the little engine that could. It’s not massive. It’s not a state-of-the-art, new facility. But it is an engine that keeps chugging up hill, and generating revenue and generating revenue and enabling us to be different and competitive.”***

As the centennial approaches, the renovation of Fenway Park has been praised and heralded as an example of innovative thinking in preservation. The work put forth by SFP, and the other community groups in the Fenway neighborhood, has been legitimized by the very people who at one time criticized them for merely being historic preservation activists that did not understand the demands of a modern sports team. Janet Marie Smith’s design insight and savvy have earned her a permanent place in the hearts of Red Sox Nation. She has become revered for what she accomplished, not only for the Red Sox but also for so called “blighted” neighborhood to which they call home. When everyone gathers to celebrate this Boston landmark, it will be interesting to see the reactions of those who deemed the renovation of Fenway Park infeasible.



# Project Team Organization



## Participant Descriptions

**John Harrington** was hired by Tom Yawkey as treasurer of the Boston Red Sox. He became a close advisor to Jean Yawkey in the '80's. After Jean's death, Harrington assumed the position of CEO of the Red Sox in 1992. In the late '90's he sought to compete with other MLB teams by building a megaplex. After that failed he attempted to build a new facility adjacent to the existing park. When he realized that was not going to be supported by City Hall, he was forced to sell the team.

**Save Fenway Park (Erika Tarlin)** - was the organization that provided the public with an alternative to demolition and reconstruction. They were the ones who stood out as a strong opposition to the Red Sox, and perhaps drummed up enough support that they might have been responsible for saving the historic grounds.

**Walsh Brothers' Construction Management** firm have been partnered with the Red Sox for over 30 years. They know the park, so they were a perfect choice for this renovation project.

**James Walsh** was the Old Owners' construction advisor. He was one of the founding Walsh Brothers, a firm specializing in construction management.

**Charles Hagenah** was an architecture professor at Roger Williams University. He has a Boston based firm (Charles Hagenah INC.) that has experience with historic preservation projects.

**The Fenway Community Development Corporation (Fenway CDC)** were involved heavily in the opposition to demolish Fenway Park. Their goals are to improve and preserve the integrity of the neighborhood, while also expanding local businesses and providing liveliness to the neighborhoods.

**Phillip Bess** is an urban ballpark designer that supports ballparks that fit into an existing urban fabric, such as Fenway Park. He assisted Save Fenway Park! with their design charette to come up with plans to oppose Harrington's reconstruction plans. Bess emphasizes "that a Fenway Park-like setting in a network of streets and blocks with distributed parking and a mix of adjacent activities is the best for generating adjacent ancillary economic development." Bess was an advocate for urban ballparks as a strategy to boost local economic development, and businesses.

**Thomas Finneran** was the Massachusetts House Speaker that was opposed to using public money for private revenue, and especially opposed to building new sports facilities using taxpayers money. He pushed back on the Patriots' desire to build a new facility and their demand for \$345 million in public funding. Now he's doing the same for the Red Sox, denying their \$545 million request for new infrastructure and an entirely new stadium.

**Michael F Flaherty Jr.** is a city councilor at large in South Boston. He dismissed the rebuilding of Fenway Park in the Fenway as unreasonable, and pointed toward South Boston's efforts to rebuild its waterfront neighborhoods. He supported the Red Sox's move from the Fenway, to a new facility on the waterfront.

**John Henry** has ample experience in the baseball world, and this was the very reason he was able to purchase the Red Sox. He overcame controversy and debate during the sell by taking advantage of his friends with MLB. He's known for giving the fans what they want, and turning around significant revenue in the process. His motto is to love the fans just as much as they love the team.

**Thomas Werner** is best known for his television productions. He worked with Luccino in San Diego and has experience in MLB.

**Larry Luccino** is a former corporate lawyer whose baseball experience includes the San Diego Padres and the Baltimore Orioles. In San Diego, his management team was entrusted with creating excitement for a team with the a poor record and a weak fan base. Luccino had to work with the lowest revenue and attendance rates in MLB, yet seemed to turn it around against all odds. The Padres have increased their sales in merchandise and season tickets, and even have a new ball park on the way. In Baltimore, Luccino was involved in the building of Camden Yards. The field pays homage to the Golden Age of baseball stadiums, and highlights the nostalgic characteristics of the sport.

This experience for Luccino perhaps over prepared him for the type of fan base and incredible enthusiasm that Boston holds for the Red Sox. There was no question that these fans were the most important. Luccino is not in it for the widespread favorable opinions of he and his new staff, he knows of the benefits in keeping sports fans happy.

**Janet Marie Smith (Janet Marie Smith)** was the architect responsible for the successful renovation of Fenway Park. Her official title with the Red Sox was Director of Ballpark Planning and Development. She had previous experience with Camden Yards, and used that as a precedent for what Fenway Park should be. She valued the community's input and realized that it was needed to make the project possible. Her one-on-one work with many of the neighborhood groups allowed them to fully be on board, and approve where they had previously opposed. Her attention to detail and concern with historic preservation is credited for the nostalgic characteristics that appear throughout the park. Many regard her fondly, and much to the Sox's disappointment, Janet Marie Smith moved back to the Baltimore Orioles in

**Fenway Affairs** is a branch of the Red Sox front office. Their mission is to mitigate the many community groups and their differing opinions about Fenway Park happenings. They put together events and meetings for the neighbors to make sure that everyone feels involved and voices their opinions early on rather than opposing to the results later. Currently, this team consists of Larry Cancro as Senior Vice President, and Beth Krudys as Manager of Fenway Affairs.

**Paul Hanlon** has taken Janet Marie Smith's place as Director of Ballpark Planning and Development, and is highly involved with Fenway Affairs, and informing the community of new developments in the park's renovation.

**D'Agostino Izzo Quirk Architects (Chuck Izzo)** - DAIQ were chosen by the Red Sox in 2002, and they ended up designing the full 10 year renovation plan. Their firm is focused on preservation, attention to detail, and integration. Their website quotes: "We believe in architecture that is unique in character but complementary to its neighbors and the larger community."

**Tremont Preservation Services (Leslie Donovan)** - TPS were brought on as consultants by Janet Marie Smith to assist with restoring the park to its historic characteristics. Leslie Donovan paid close attention to every detail to make sure the renovation was authentic, and containing true historic value.

**Boston Landmarks Commission (Gary Russell)** - Is a branch of city hall that reviews and designates Boston's Landmarks. They worked closely with the Red Sox to give them accelerated landmark status in order to help fulfill tax credit funding. Gary Russell, the on staff architect at the BLC, especially helped advise the project architects about what would be approved/denied by the Massachusetts Historical Commission.

**Massachusetts Historical Commission (Brona Simon)** - approved the state tax credit for Fenway Park. Brona Simon was in charge of this project, and she paid attention to detail where perhaps other consultants on the project would not. For example, the location of cell-phone reception cables were of her concern. The MHC needed to make sure that the historical integrity of the park was kept throughout the modernization process.

**Ben Woods/ Carlos Zapata** were Werner's architects before the bidding was accepted as him being a part of the Henry Bid. They put together a plan for Werner of renovating Fenway in place.

**Charles Steinberg** was the Executive Vice President of Public Affairs. He was a part of the Luccino Baltimore-San Diego-Boston team, and is essential to implement their team rehabilitation system. Steinberg's concern is where to improve quality and improve sales. This is a huge part of keeping the fans happy, and provides an additional reason (as if die-hard fandom isn't enough) to come back to Fenway even if the Sox aren't winning every time.

**Boston Preservation Alliance** - Is a group that stepped in at the beginning of John Harrington's attempt at demolition and reconstruction. They provided education for the public about why keeping Fenway Park would be beneficial to the city. They describe themselves as "a nonprofit organization that protects and improves the quality of Boston's distinct architectural heritage."

## Conclusion

After years of failed attempts, the new ownership of the Red Sox organization, recognized the previous owner's short comings in their approach to modernize the Red Sox's facilities. Right from the start they included organizations, like SFP and the Fenway CDC, in their decision making regarding the fate of the ballpark. The owners had the foresight to create a team that would focus all of their energies on community outreach and development. They hired Janet Marie Smith, as Director of Ballpark Planning and Development, because of her previous experience in collaborative projects.

As the project architect, Janet Marie Smith understood that strong design vision would not be enough to allow any project to be accepted by the community. She understood what the old ownership never grasped. Which was that in order to change a building with such strong ties, not only metaphorically with the members of its community but also concretely with the existing urban fabric and infrastructure, an architect needed to be sensitive in their project intervention.

This case study looked at how architects can ensure the success of a project while including a collection of diverse participants in the design process. The more opinions addressed, the more the building becomes an extension of its users. Allowing the project to contain many functions creates an integrated building that directly respond to its user's needs. Plugging into community, local economy, and local politics guarantees a well rooted design that serves many and is contextually significant.

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Exterior view of Fenway Park, 1912. "Baseball newstalgist" Bill Chuck.

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All other graphics were created by the authors.



## Website Information

### Recommended Search Words:

Collaboration  
Integration  
Fenway Park  
Community Groups  
Public Subsidies  
Historic Preservation  
Tax Credit Funding  
Revitalization  
Local Economy  
Public Opposition